

Distances

by Teta Hyral

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Summary: This story takes place between Suikoden 1 and Suikoden 2.

It doesn't have any spoilers for 2, but you might want to stay away from it if you haven't played a few hours through 1. It's about everyone's favorite blue-boy. ^_^

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Author's Note

> This was inspired by a rather vivid dream I had the other night. (Don't laugh. If you're here, I bet you dream about RPGs too!) If you haven't gotten to a certain point in Suikoden I (rather early in the game, so chances are you've played through it), I suggest you come back later. As for a timeframe, this takes place soon after the end of Suikoden I, though it has vague references to II.

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> <p>Disclaimer: None of the characters in this story are mine. They are copyright Konami, I forgot the year I'd better look it up one of these days. I have no intention of making any money off of this.

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**by Teta Hyral

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> <p> Memories. How often must they find their way through the labyrinth of my mind and seep into the realm of my consciousness? The young brunette man closed his deep blue eyes and tipped his head

backwards, as if his thoughts would simply fall to the back of his head with this simple action, never to be heard from again. He breathed a little deeper, though the damp, cool air of the evening seemed to debilitate his already fatigued body. He rested a gloved hand on the sword that was perpetually by his side. It was given to him as a child, and since then was the home in which his soul resided. Here was a spirit tempered by the hammer of that ruthless blacksmith known only as Time.

Damn. They're so damned persistent.

Just like...

He opened his eyes. Not again. He had done it again. He couldn't live this way, spending every minute pining away. Since the end of the war, there had been little else on his mind. He needed a diversion of some sort. A good one. One that wouldn't take him back...

To her....

He looked down before him at the warm blaze in the fireplace and sighed. _Her dream_, he thought to himself as he knelt on the wooden floor of the room. His handsome face was bathed in the flickering light of the welcoming fire, though in his intense blue eyes was an expression of ultimate pain and loneliness.

We are living her dream....

He had made sure that it would happen. To the end, he had fought for it with a passion that never yielded, almost as if she had been with him at every given moment. Almost as if... she had been fighting through his physical being the whole time. _Is that it?_ he mused. Then the man that everyone--yes, perhaps even herself--believed he had become, that valiant warrior of the Stars of Destiny, perhaps he had never truly existed! He was just an illusion, a man with the strength of a spirit that was not his own. Her goal accomplished, it truly did seem as if there was no fighting spirit left within him.

He pulled off his blue bandana, signature of the village of his birth, with one hand, then rubbed his forehead with the other. Even as he turned his back to the humble flame, the apparent tan line on his forehead was still slightly visible. Yet again, it was a sign of his birthplace. He would have spent his whole life there...

...if it hadn't been for her.

He sighed again and lifted his head slightly. Nothing seemed to ease his pain. He knew that the memory was that which weakened him every day since then. He just... didn't... _want_ to let go. It was a difficult thing to explain to others. Maybe that was why he spent many a sleepless night in front of the fire, always trying to mend a wound that wouldn't heal.

Because no one would understand.

He looked around this room, his only escape in this world. The fireplace. Windows. Chairs around tables. No one but himself and the fire. He sat down in one of the chairs. _Damn. Viktor must have made this chair._ He stood up again and walked to the window, staring out

at the ominous dark mist outside. There was no moon, there were no stars. There was no light in this world where he would not even let himself live.

I have to come to terms with myself.

Sudden revelation. Everyone else insisted that it was not his fault. He knew for a fact that it was not his fault. However, he continued, all this time, insisting that he had been weak, had never been the valiant hero that some may have thought he was. Well, maybe he _wasn't_ as strong as the next person. He just had to forgive himself for his weakness.

That was the hard part. He had been raised, every day of his childhood, as a warrior, never believing himself to be the slightest bit frail in any sense, and then she came along. She was strong beyond all of his belief. She had a will stronger than the entire Imperial Army. She of all people was the only one who could calm his spirit. He did not wish that he had never met her; no, this was far from the truth.

He only wished she were still here to see her dream come to light. The people of the new Toran Republic felt their new government came as a godsend. Everyone knew the name McDohl. There was a whole room in the President's Palace dedicated fully to him. His name would be written in the history books as long as humans exist in this world. Few seemed to look back beyond the McDohl era, a fire kindled during the greatest years of the Scarlet Moon Empire. There was one who saw the truth in the world, one who was going to bring it to light.

Yes, it was obviously her. No one remembered her. Well, perhaps McDohl did, but he had disappeared shortly after his coming to power. No one even mentioned her name anymore. _Come to think of it,... I may be the only one,_ he thought to himself. It occurred only occasionally, and no one seemed to notice him. Her being was lost to the world.

He blinked hard a couple of times, not quite knowing why he had done so, then walked across the room and up the stairs that led to his room. It seemed to be happening without reason. Opening the door to his room, he took a couple of quick steps to the shelves opposite the door and took out one plain piece of paper, a bottle of ink, and a white quill. With these, he headed back down the stairs, forgetting to close the door behind him.

This is, perhaps, the only way.

He sat in a chair facing the fire. Quill in hand, he began to write feverishly; the world around him had no more meaning to him than an ant in the garden. There were occasional ink smudges, but he seemed never to notice them. He was fixated on his task at hand. Inexorable. Armageddon could not have stopped him from finishing his mission.

Outside, the mist grew thicker and a cool breeze began to weave its way through the trees, into the window. The trees themselves were barely visible now. Inside, the fire dwindled, its supply of wood depleted. It was ready to give in to the foreign wind of the outside world.

And he? He was signing his name with a flourish at the bottom of the paper. Yes, he was done. It was quick and simple, yet he knew he was not yet done. He stood up, knocking over the bottle of ink. He didn't notice the black stream dripping across the table and onto the floor. Had someone else been there, he would have noticed the significance of this event, but it was at this time that the fire ceased to give its warmth and light.

He opened the door and stepped out of the wooden hovel. The night welcomed him with a gust of icy wind that blew his cape around so that it beat against itself violently. He cared not for this. He clutched the letter in hand tightly, the ink smearing slightly on the fingers of his glove. He closed the door behind him and began walking west, slowly, deliberately.

He began to cough violently, the chilly, saturated air nearly choking him at times. Upon his exit from the forest, a piercing rain fell from above, drenching him. The storm upon him seemed a deliberate action of Mother Nature in a futile attempt to halt him.

He persisted, his boots squelching in the mud. It never occurred to him that perhaps his journey might be easier if he removed his cape. The wind was at his face now, and spears of raindrops pummeled his tormented body. He cringed, narrowed his eyes, and forced his legs forward one at a time, clutching his cape and holding it close to his body.

Ah, his destination was finally in sight.

From this side, it looked like a steep hill overlooking the flat grasslands beyond. One more ordeal for him, a simple climb up to the top. His clothes were completely filthy; had he been in the light, no one would have guessed his nickname as "Blue Lightning."

The simple climb was beginning to be a good trial for him. His weakness was catching up with him, and he lost his footing. He reached out to brace himself, but his right hand stayed at his side; it still held the precious letter that would be his only hope of salvation. He plummeted to the ground, pain shooting through his body at alarming speed. He had survived worse than this.... Why is it now that he fails?

No, he mustn't fail. He was just beginning to live again....

The rain masked the tears that trickled down his face as he forced himself up onto his feet again. Blood dripped from a gash on his left cheek, his salty tears stinging the wound. These tears were not of pain, of worry, of sorrow. He staggered slowly to the edge of what now appeared as a cliff.

Nothing would stop him. Not now, not ever.

"Odessa!" he cried feverishly. "I have come for forgiveness!"

He straightened himself out and held his fist high in the air. The letter he had written was a wad of damp pulp now, and even if the paper itself were still intact, the ink had run down it, making the words illegible.

Still, he spoke the words of the letter as if they were engraved in his heart.

"My dearest Odessa! The distances between us surpass time and space, and this is the only way I can think of to reach you. It has been too long since your death, but I cannot forgive myself for it. I know it wasn't my fault, I know I was away when it happened. I know that it was perhaps Destiny that willed it, a Fate that thought not of my own pain. Still, my anguish continues with this knowledge. If you have not forgiven me, then I am lost! _Odessa, give me penance, I implore you!_"

With that, he flung the wad of pulp that was once a letter far off into the distance and held his hand high.

"_THOR SHOT!_"

Bursts of lightning crashed down from the heavens, surrounding the letter, then consuming it in its wrath. He fell again to the earth, gasping for breath, feeling the ache in every bone of his body. _At least I tried...._

A warmth came over him suddenly, and his breathing slowed as he opened his heavy eyelids.

...Sunlight?

A ray of sunlight.... Odessa.... You have... given me hope again. Thank you.

The storm gradually moved on, and the day was bright. He had missed the sunrise, but he didn't mind. He had seen forgiveness with his own eyes. That was enough for every sunrise for the rest of his life.

Nearby, a pair of boots could be heard squelching towards him. He lifted his head and saw his companion, the bear-man, Viktor. Slightly damp, yes, but it was probably the closest he had had to a shower in weeks.

"Flik? What're you doing here? We were all looking for you everywhere, and here you were, admiring the storm, weren't you? Heh, did you see that lightning strike? Rare in these temps. That'd even give 'Blue Lightning' a run for his money, eh?"

Flik smiled and coughed.

"Whoa there, what happened to you? Did the FurFurs give you trouble?" Viktor smirked. He reached over to give his friend a hand. "You really shouldn't go out in weather like this. It's unhealthy."

Flik smiled as he was heaved onto his companion's shoulders. "You sound like somebody's mother."

Viktor gave a hearty laugh and the pair began their trek home.

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> <p> Yup, that's the end. Not very long, and it evoked less feeling in me than I had really wanted, but I am proud of parts of

it. This one's from junior year, around finals time when I'm supposed to be studying. ^_^ Comments and criticisms are welcome at tetahyral@squaresoftrules.com<a>._

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End
file.